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336. KARENS CUTTING THEIR CROP.

such an extent that they destroy whole crops and stocks of corn and produce famine. Towards harvest time birds have to be scared again. The rice crop is generally ripe before the last rains fall. A chance break is taken advantage of to cut, dry, and thresh the corn, which is got under cover in a bin on the *taungya*, or *pwaza*, as it is called when done with. The secondary crops ripen later. Cucumbers, pumpkins, marrows, brinjals, and other coarse vegetables, and sometimes tomatoes, are sown on the margins and along the pathways. In a good season the Karéns get about double the quantity of grain they need for living. The whole of the secondary crop is for trade. In the moist ravines they cultivate the betel-palm and betel-vine, and they have taken to orange gardening at the foot of the hills. They also collect the wild betel-vine and honey by climbing high trees (No. 362); the tree-ladder is made by driving bamboo spikes into the wood. The only honey of Burma is wild; but bees frequent the limestone caves to such a degree that in some places the right to collect honey and wax in them is farmed out. Honey sells for ten annas and wax for two and a half rupees a viss. The staple food of the Karéns is rice. They make a curry in the Burman way; with it they eat *ngapi*, salt fish or fresh fish, or the flesh of pig and deer, especially the "small deer" they trap at the *taungya*. They keep goats, poultry and pigs, which latter are the scavengers of the villages. But the chief purpose for which these animals are bred is to be killed and offered to the *nats*, who have to be propitiated on all occasions. At every village site and clearing for cultivation a

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338. KAREN WOMAN COOKING.

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341. KAREN LIQUOR-STILL.

miniature bamboo hut is made (*tâ-lhâ*, No. 337), and furnished with utensils or symbols of such. The joints of bamboo piled against the horizontal bar represent vessels for the blood of the offering; the whole offering is really appropriated by the votaries. The *yahán* have persuaded the Karéns under their influence to discontinue keeping animals, so as to be out of temptation to sacrifice to *nats*. The Karén idea of *nat* is exclusively an evil spirit, whereas the Burmans have the conception of *thadyâ* and *byammâ*, beings of a transfigured human nature; by them *nat* is chiefly used in this sense (p. 186). The Karéns also offer to the *nats* the liquor they brew (*kaung*), which is distilled from a wort made by setting boiled rice to ferment. The drinking of this offering at the shrine is accompanied by saltatory movements. What the Karéns can save, they invest in purchase of elephants (No. 333). Owing to the transient nature of the hill-settlements, the paths do not get well enough worn for pack-oxen. The elephant is the only beast of burden available to them; an elephant can carry five to ten hundredweight in the hills (No. 314). A small village clubs together to buy an elephant to carry in the corn and take the secondary crops to market; well-to-do villages own several elephants. Individuals who own a couple are accounted wealthy, but some own as many as twenty. They hire the animals out for carrying produce or for timber-work, or engage in this business on their own account. Their spare cash the Karéns bury in the earth or hide in growing bamboos. The point of the *dâ* is struck into a green culm so as to open a slit. The rupees are dropped in, the *dâ* pulled out, and not a trace remains. Karéns are good workers in bamboo and cane, and are excellent woodmen. They are expert in

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342. KAREN HIDING COIN IN A GROWING BAMBOO.